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AUTHOR Davis, Voyia
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ABSTRACT

Thirty-eight teachers completed the Illinois Quality Schools Index Survey, which measured teachers' attitudes towards characteristics of quality schools. The majority of the teachers felt that the characteristics indicative of a quality school were often implemented in their school. Over half the teachers felt that their schools often or always demonstrated: leadership; a clearly stated mission; clear expectations for administration, staff, students, and parents; more time on teaching and learning; frequent monitoring of what students are taught; preparation of students to be lifetime learners; an atmosphere of cooperation, trust, positiveness, and orderliness; and parent/community participation. The study supports the translation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles into categories appropriate for quality schools. A key belief of TQM is that quality leads to increased productivity which, in turn, leads to increased job satisfaction in the workplace. The paper concludes that the translation of industrial quality principles into educational practice shows great promise for improving the quality of education in the United States. (Contains 28 references.) (JDD)

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TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY OF THEIR SCHOOLS

Voyia Davis

The idea of quality in education is not new. Other names have been used- e.g., "excellence," "effective schools" -to promote the idea of improving the educational experience and educational outcomes. What is new is the adaptation of the industrial quality philosophy to the problems being encountered in schools and classrooms around the country. Some calling it "Total Quality Management," others "Total Quality Education," and still others, the "Continuous Improvement Process". The name, however, is not as important as the prevailing concept: no system is so perfect that it cannot be improved, and only by improving the education system continuously over the long run can we reverse the downward trend we have recently experienced (Rinehart,1993).

In order to improve the educational system to reverse the downward trend the research on the topic needs to be accurate and more comprehensive. There is a great deal of research today that states what characteristics are involved in creating Total Quality Education. While on the other hand, there is a shortage of research that states teachers opinions of these characteristics. Teachers are the people who would be directly involved in creating, implementing and supporting the components of Total Quality Education, so therefore it is important to know what they think of the research findings. If it is found that teachers feel these characteristics do not describe their school, than maybe more pressure can be implemented, within their particular school or school district to begin the process of restructuring within the school, to reflect the characteristics indicative of Total Quality Education.

A need for improvement is supported by the fact that early academic failures tend to be self-fulling prophesies for later years. Young people who grow up believing that, despite their best efforts, they are incapable of achieving quality results in their schoolwork, begin to see themselves as having little inherent quality. Rightly or wrongly, they may even come to believe that schools exist, not to help them improve, but rather to

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judge, criticize, and rank-order their efforts.

More and more educators are discovering the natural fit that quality principles and practices have with their own aspirations for the continuous improvement of education (Bonstingl,1992). However, this surge of interest worldwide in TQM and its potential for dramatically improving educational systems, processes, and outcomes is, predictably, beginning to spawn its share of detractors. One of the most confounding of these is Alfie Kohn, whose helpful ideas about the destructive nature of competition have given impetus to the Quality movement in education (Bonstingl,1993).

Research regarding job satisfaction in the educational setting has been viewed with as much interest as that of job satisfaction in the industrial setting (Carver and Sergiovanni, 1980; Miskel,1973;Trusty and Sergiovanni,1966;Hoppock,1935). Most educational researchers, though, had adapted theories and beliefs from other disciplines (Carver and Sergiovanni,1980;Miskel,1973; Trusty and Sergiovanni, 1966) and had either found a basis of support or rejection as a result of such studies. Researchers in the educational setting had examined many factors which were thought to account for satisfaction of teachers. Some of the factors were identified as "advancement, autonomy, colleagues, creativity, pay, recognition, responsibility, school policies, security, supervision, work itself and working conditions"(Lester,1987,p.225).

Hoppock (1935) utilized information from his New Hope study in correlation with the information from a separate study of 500 teachers from fifty-one urban and rural communities to make certain determinations regarding teacher job satisfaction. From his original sample, Hoppock narrowed the group to the 100 most satisfied and 100 least satisfied teachers. He then compared the responses of these two groups on surveys to locate any noticeable differences. The satisfied group appeared to enjoy better relationships with their superiors and associates; they also seemed to exude feelings of success and accomplishment at a much higher percentage than the dissatisfied group of respondents. Surprisingly, no teacher in either of Hoppock's sample groups stated a dislike for children (Smith &Smith,1993).

Based upon Maslow's needs hierarchy theory and modeled after Porter's research of managers in the industrial setting, Trusty and Sergiovanni (1966) conducted a study of all the teachers and administrators in one

school district. After grouping 223 subjects according to age, sex, years of experience, and professional role, results were computed to determine significant differences on the thirteen questionnaire items. Significant differences were found to exist between the varying age groups with regard to psychological need deficiencies (i.e.,personal growth and development, feeling of fulfillment in their present school position, and prestige of their school position) and overall job satisfaction. Trusty and Sergiovanni found that the need deficiencies were the smallest in the twenty to twenty-four year-old group, and the forty-five and over group. The group consisting of those subjects between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age tended to be the least satisfied with their work or their position, a finding consistent with Herzberg's studies (Herzberg,1966). These results were consistent with Morse's studies of white-collar workers and their satisfaction fluctuation from high satisfaction early in their careers and then again in the latter years of service, to low satisfaction levels at the intermediate point (Morse,1953). Elementary teachers appeared to be more satisfied with their positions than any other group surveyed with the exception of administrators (Trusty and Sergiovanni,1966). Trusty ad Sergiovanni addressed possible alternatives available to those who expressed low job satisfaction; one of the alternatives was to remain in the classroom setting and lower their aspirations. However, as was stressed by Trusty and Sergiovanni, "teachers who lower their aspiration levels serve as deterrents to the creativity and growth of students and to educational innovations" (1966,p. 177).

The theory popularized by Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman was also examined in the educational setting on numerous occasions. Sergiovanni (1967) interviewed seventy-one teachers in an attempt to determine whether the distribution would change when the teachers were broken into certain predetermined subpopulations: male versus female, tenure versus non-tenure, and elementary versus secondary (Sergiovanni,1967). The researcher found that "achievement, recognition, and responsibility were factors that contributed predominantly to teacher job

satisfaction"(1967,p.76). He also found that "the first level factors which appeared significantly as lows... were interpersonal relations (subordinates),interpersonal relations (peers), supervision-technical, school policy and administration, and personal life" (1967,p.75).

With regard to the various subgroups, Sergiovanni found that these groups were similar in their responses to sources of satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction. The students, as the researcher found, seemed to be the crux of the teachers' work; they served as the raw material for the successes and the acts of recognition that were primary sources of satisfaction for the teachers in this study.

In similar studies,Savage (1967) and Johnson (1967) each attempted to determine factors causing satisfaction/dissatisfaction in teachers. Both researchers sought to ascertain whether certain factors or motivators enhanced teacher job satisfaction. Savage (1967) attempted to discover a correlation between grade level of teaching, gender and educational training upon factors affecting teacher job satisfaction (Smith and Smith,1993).

Johnson's study (1967) sought to determine factors associated with high and low job satisfaction and to determine if the factors differed according to grade level taught. He found that five factors-achievement, interpersonal relations, recognition, work itself and responsibility-significantly affected teacher job satisfaction with other factors contributing to job dissatisfaction. Only slight differences in job satisfaction were found between senior high school teachers and elementary teachers, with the senior high teachers striving for more responsibility; elementary teachers, however, needed more interpersonal relations with students to gain satisfaction from the job. This researcher's results differed slightly from Herzberg's original study of accountants and engineers (Smith and Smith,1993).

In the years following World War II, Edwards Deming, an American statistician with a new management theory, took his ideas to Japan. The Japanese, devastated by the effects of the war, were looking to restructure their economy, and Deming's principles became the blueprint they needed. Now, more than four decades later, Japanese products are in

demand worldwide.

The Japanese success story has made Deming's management theory, which some call Total Quality Management (TQM), a phenomenon that is getting renewed attention in America. With its focus on customer satisfaction, employee empowerment, and product quality, it has stirred interest among

American managers, from car manufacturers to hospital administrators, and most recently, educators (Weaver,1994).

Considerable effort has gone into translating ideas generated by TQM to education, and adaptations of Deming's fourteen points pepper recent educational journals. Most of the points, such as the dissolving of barriers between departments, are essentially the same in education as they are in the business world. Some TQM advocates, however, call for changes in education that may seem radical to educators.

TQM recognizes students as both customers and employees of the educational system. Administrators need to involve students in their own education by training them to question the learning process, and once the students have questioned it, administrators need and once the students have questioned it, administrators need to seriously consider student proposals for change (Olson,1992b).

TQM calls for changes in teachers' relationships with both students and administrators; teachers need to view education through students' eyes, and they need to work with administrators as a team. This teamwork is largely the responsibility of administrators, who need to delegate some of their responsibility and power to teachers (Rhodes,1992).

Instead of using standardized tests and grades to measure students' progress, schools that embrace TQM often try to assess student progress regularly throughout the school year. By doing so, they avoid bringing problems to students' attention at the end of the year, when it is too late to do anything about them. The same sort of process is used to evaluate teachers and administrators as well; instead of basing teacher evaluation on one classroom visit, teachers are evaluated throughout the year (Blankstein,1992)

In Schools of Quality, teachers and students, together, learn how to learn as they create collaborative, trusting environments in which failure is but a temporary step on the road to continuous improvement. They-along with policymakers, administrators, families, and others who support the work of the school-learn how to create true learning communities, where developing a "yearning for learning" is everyone's central focus (Bonstingl,1993).

Like Deming, Glasser strongly believes that "quality always leads to increased productivity "(1990a,p.27) and, in turn, leads toward increased satisfaction in the work place.

The Quality School posits the notion that those individuals genuinely interested in creating a successful school environment must abandon the prevailing paradigm of boss-managed schools and move rapidly toward the concept of lead-managed schools. As Glasser (1990b) states, "boss management is wrong because it limits both the quality of the work and the productivity of the worker"(p.430). The sooner teachers and administrators begin to examine and accept the power of internal motivation and the need for total quality, the more quickly the boss-management school will convert to lead-management. It is through this conversion to lead-management that overall teacher job satisfaction will also be enhanced (Smith and Smith,1993).

The surge of interest worldwide in TQM and its potential for dramatically improving educational systems, processes, and outcomes is, predictably, beginning to spawn its share of detractors (Bonstingl,1993).

Kohn (1993) felt that educators are attempting to transplant a model native to the business world, along with its methods and metaphors, to the classroom. He also felt that some educators waving the Quality banner have either misunderstood Deming's work or drawn from it selectivity to lend credibility to their own objectives.

Kohn (1993) believe that a marketplace model, even correctly applied, does not belong in the classroom. The difference between two management approaches (old and new, top-down and participative, Taylor and Deming)

is less significant than the difference between any method for managing workers and what happens in classrooms. He also stated that "William Glasser(1990), whose books have supported many educators in transforming schools into more humanistic places, insists that "the industrial analogy of workers and managers...is both accurate and appropriate." Workers are adults. Most students are children, whose capacities and limits demand a developmentally appropriate set of strategies. If workers are helped to acquire skills, this is intended as a way to build an effective organization; it is rarely a goal in its own right.

By contrast, helping students to acquire skills, to become good learners and good people, is the very point of school. While it is undesirable for many reasons to manipulate workers with incentives, they still have to be paid. Nothing, including grades, is analogous in a school setting. And most important, workers produce goods like automobiles and houses;they are hired to make things. The only thing students should be making is meaning. Kohn (1993) felt that to turn the classroom into a workplace, through our practices or our parlance, is to put at risk the intellectual exploration and development that ought to be taking place there.

Frequent studies have been conducted by interested researchers or organizations to ascertain the relationship between teacher job satisfaction and morale. In each of these studies, a different aspect of job satisfaction was examined, with varying conclusions determined. Fuller and Miskel (1972) found that 89% of the teachers surveyed were satisfied with their job, while an NEA study (1980) found that only 65% were satisfied. With the many changes that will arise in the educational setting as a result of the educational reform movement, similar studies examining teacher job satisfaction are certain to continue. Many researchers do believe, however, that since incentives in the teaching profession are limited by legal and collective bargaining constraints, teacher satisfaction must be increased within the teaching situation itself (Lortie,1975).

One of the most important contributions to the satisfaction which teachers take in their work...is a sense of professional status, responsibility, and freedom.... The impression of all interviews was that strong teachers place perhaps above everything else the freedom to plan,

to experiment, to feel that he has the professional responsibility for meeting the needs of the pupils with whom he is working (Chase,1951,p.130).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine teacher's assessment of the quality of their schools.

Procedures

This study includes the available sample of twenty-two classroom teachers employed in the summer school program at two elementary schools, and twenty-six teachers enrolled in two graduate classes at a university. Thirty-eight usable returns were received from teachers, which represents seventy-nine percent of the population sample.

This questionnaire was distributed to forty-eight teachers. They were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each statement by circling the corresponding response. The completed questionnaires were placed in individual envelopes, which were provided, and then placed in a collection envelope in the office of each school. The completed questionnaires from teachers enrolled in graduate level classes were turned in to the distributor at the end of each class period.

The Illinois Quality Schools Index Survey (1994) was revised to measure teachers' attitudes towards whether or not the characteristics indicating a quality school described their school as suggested in current research on the subject. The instrument included nine categorical and a comment section: Leadership, Mission, Expectations, Time On Task, Monitoring, Basic Skills, Climate, and Parent/Community Participation.

The instrument was pilot tested on ten members of the population who were not included in the study.

The results of the questionnaire were then tabulated, the percentages of never, seldom, often, and always were analyzed to determine the attitudes of the teachers toward current trends regarding total quality schools. The Chi Square was used to determine the Statistical Significance (.05) of the responses.

Findings:

The data in the table show that majority of the teachers felt that the characteristics indicative of a quality school was often implemented in their school as indicated in current research concerning Total Quality Schools. Table 1 summarizes the statistical analyses.

In regards to Leadership, thirty-nine and fifty-two percent respectively, significantly (.05) indicated that this characteristic was exhibited seldom and often as compared to never and always in their schools. Only two and five percent respectively, felt that it was never and always evident. The responses were not statistically significant.

In regards to Mission, thirty-nine and fifty-two percent respectively, significantly (.05) indicated that having goals clearly stated and visible was seldom and often as compared to always implemented in their school. Only seven percent felt that it was always evident. The responses were not statistically significant.

It was found that sixty-three percent significantly (.05) indicated that in regards to Expectations, the fact that everyone is expected to do their best in everything they do, was often as compared to seldom and always implemented in their school. Only twenty-six and eleven percent felt that it was seldom and always evident,respectively. The responses were not statistically significant.

Opinions toward Time On Task reported fifty-two percent significantly (.05) indicated that spending more time on teaching and learning raises the likelihood that students will learn,was often as compared to never, seldom and always implemented in their school. Only five, twenty-one and thirteen percent respectively, felt that it was never, seldom and always indicated. The responses were not statistically significant.

The characteristic Monitoring showed that sixty-six percent significantly (.05) indicated that monitoring is most meaningful and relevant when it occurs frequently and provides immediate feedback often as compared to seldom and always implemented in their school. Only twenty-six and eight

percent respectively, felt that it was seldom and always evident. The responses were not statistically significant.

In regards to Basic Skills, sixty-six percent significantly (.05), indicated that basic skills include more than the three R's, was often as compared to seldom and always implemented in their school. Only twenty-six and eight percent respectively, felt that it was seldom and always implemented. The responses were not statistically significant.

Teachers opinions about the Climate, showed that fifty-two percent significantly (.05) indicated that the atmosphere reflects cooperation, trust, positiveness and orderliness, often as compared to never, seldom and often implemented in their school. While five,twenty-six and fifteen percent respectively, felt that it was never, seldom and always evident. The responses were not statistically significant.

And lastly, in regards to Parent/Community Participation, seventy-nine percent significantly (.05) indicated that parents and community members are the foundation of their school, was often as compared to never, seldom and always implemented in their school. Only thirteen and eight percent felt that it was seldom and always evident. The responses were not statistically significant.

Overall, the data from this study leads to the acceptance of the operational hypothesis: Teachers will favor characteristics used in the Quality Schools Survey as measured by the Quality Schools Survey questionnaire.

The findings from this study suggests that teachers felt that categories indicating a quality school are being significantly implemented often at their school.

This study supports the beliefs of Deming and Glasser mentioned in the Review of Literature. Like Deming, Glasser strongly believes that "quality always leads to increased productivity" and, in turn, leads to increased job satisfaction in the work place.

This study points to a need to continue such research utilizing a much

larger sample. It is not enough for individual schools or districts to have their own organizational visions or missions. Solidarity of action across the entire education system for quality and continuous improvement is needed. It is a monumental yet delicate task. Past research indicates that there is a correlation between quality schools and job satisfaction. Further refinement of the study may indicate different results for different age groups, teachers of different sex, or for teachers with different ethnic backgrounds.

The translation of industrial quality principles into educational practice shows great promise for improving the quality of education in this country. The basic concepts of customer satisfaction and continuous improvement are easily transferable (Rinehart,1993).

Table 1

Responses to Quality Schools Survey Questionnaire

DO THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBE YOUR SCHOOL?

A= NEVER B= SELDOM C= OFTEN D= ALWAYS

N=38

Rate the importance of each characteristic to Quality Schooling by circling the appropriate number from a column below.

	A	B	C	D
LEADERSHIP: IN QUALITY SCHOOL,THE LEADERSHIP DEMONSTRATES THE ABILITY TO MAINTAIN & CONTROL SYSTEMS & IS ABLE TO ENGAGE STAFF & TEACHING PERSONNEL IN CONSTRUCTIVE COLLABORATION TOWARD GOAL ACHIEVEMENT.	1 2%	15 * 39%	20 * 52%	2 5%
MISSION: IN A QUALITY SCHOOL,THE COMMUNITY,THE SCHOOL STAFF, AND STUDENTS ALL GENERALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THE SCHOOL IS TRYING TO DO BECAUSE ITS MISSION AND GOALS ARE CLEARLY STATED AND VISIBLE.	0	15 * 39%	20 * 52%	3 8%
EXPECTATIONS: IN A QUALITY SCHOOL,ADMINISTRATION, STAFF, AND STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO THEIR BEST WORK IN EVERYTHING THEY DO. PARENTS KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM AND THEIR CHILDREN.	0	10 26%	24 * 63%	4 11%
TIME ON TASK: IN A QUALITY SCHOOL, SPENDING MORE TIME ON TEACHING AND LEARNING RAISES THE LIKELIHOOD THAT STUDENTS WILL LEARN.	2 5%	8 21%	20 * 52%	5 13%
MONITORING: IN A QUALITY SCHOOL, MONITORING OCCURS OFTEN TO MAKE SURE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT, AND IS MOST MEANINGFUL, AND RELEVANT WHEN IT OCCURS FREQUENTLY AND PROVIDES IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK.	0	10 26%	25 * 66%	3 8%
BASIC SKILLS: IN A QUALITY SCHOOL, THE TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF BASIC SKILLS INCLUDE MORE THAN THE FAMILIAR THREE R'S. IN ORDER TO PREPARE STUDENTS TO BE LIFE-TIME LEARNERS.	0	10 26%	25 * 66%	3 8%
CLIMATE: IN A QUALITY SCHOOL,THE ATMOSPHERE REFLECTS COOPERATION,TRUST, POSITIVE-NESS,AND ODERLINESS.	2 5%	10 26%	20 * 52%	6 * 15%
PARENT/COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN A QUALITY SCHOOL,PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE THE FOUNDATION. THEY HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS,STAFF,AND STUDENTS.	0	5 13%	30 * 79%	3 8%

* = Significance at the .05 level of confidence

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